



Planning & Community
Development

Air Duct Testing

Attention HOMEOWNERS ... YOU MAY BE HEATING THE OUTSIDE!

On January 1, 2011, provisions of the new 2009 WA State Energy Code became effective.

This code recognizes that successful achievement of State energy use reduction goals cannot solely depend on new construction requirements. Research has found that a lot of energy is consumed heating air that leaks from ducts located in unconditioned spaces such as crawlspaces and attics. Poorly sealed and insulated ducts in unconditioned space can lose 15-30% of your heated before it even gets to the register. Not only is this an avoidable waste of energy; it costs homeowners a lot of money since you are heating the outside!

To help remedy this situation, current homeowners will be required to take additional, if and when they purchase a new furnace.

If your home has more than 40 lineal feet of existing ductwork in an unconditioned space, you will be required to test these ducts for leakage when you install a new furnace or air handling fan. Initially, you will be asked to consider sealing ducts the test reveals to be leaking excessively. Revised regulations are presently under review at the State level that may well make the corrective sealing mandatory as soon as this coming Spring.

If you own an older home, chances are very high that your ducts leak. If they are in your crawlspace or attic, you are encouraged to act now rather than waiting for your furnace to break down. Sealing your ductwork prevents conditioned air from escaping. Keep records of duct testing and sealing work you have done since you will not be required to do it again when you get a new furnace.

Business Hours: M – F 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. ♦ Permit Processing Hours: M – F 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Note: This handout is for informational use only and is not to be substituted for the Shoreline Development Code. 2/2014